OneCode ACS™ FAQs

Q: What can I do with a nine digit Sequence Number length restriction, when I am used to 16 alphanumeric characters with Traditional ACS?

A: Since the 11 digits directly following the Sequence Number refer directly to the addressee's delivery point, combining the use of the delivery point in conjunction with the additional 9 characters should provide an extreme degree of uniqueness. As an alternative, some mailers are considering the use of a table to relate the Sequence number to the existing keyline.

Q: Is the Sequence Number field required? Do I pad?

A: While the Sequence Number "stands in" for the traditional ACS keyline information, the difference is that the Sequence Number is also used to provide barcode uniqueness. Each piece in the mailing must have a unique Sequence Number. It should never be all zeroes.

Q: Can I have multiple Business Entity Identifier (BEI) codes?

A: You can, although the number of BEIs you can be assigned are dependent upon the services you request, and each program does have limits. For instance, if you are participating in OneCode Confirm™, your level of participation in that program determines how many BEIs you are eligible for.

Q: Is a check digit still required for my keylines (Sequence Number)?

A: Since the barcode is self-correcting, there are no check digits for any individual field or the barcode as a whole.

Q: What happens to mail where OneCode ACS is not readable?

A: Where the barcode is unreadable or the barcode does not contain the correct elements, no address correction will be provided, and the mail will be processed as unendorsed.

Q: Is there a list of USPS licensed software vendors that provide 4-state barcode applications?

A: USPS will not be licensing software vendors. Open code will be provided to be inserted into a mailer's programming. Please see the barcode-specific information at http://www.ribbs.usps.gov/onecodesolution .

Q: When will there be a cost advantage to me for OneCode ACS over Traditional ACS?

A: The 2006 Rate Case was submitted May of 2006. The length of time it will take to be adjudicated, approved, and scheduled is expected to create an effective date in summer of 2007 at the soonest, and possibly not until January 2008. For more information on the details of the rate case, please visit our website at http://www.usps.com/ratecase/.

Q: Will the reasons for non-delivery of mail still be available with OneCode ACS?

A: The short answer is - sometimes. The design of this first version of OneCode ACS uses collection of the 4-State barcode information as the mail passes through Postal automation *after it has been labeled in PARS or CFS*. Records produced by this version will not provide the reason for non-delivery currently provided by the traditional ACS product. However, in geographic areas served by the Postal Automated Redirection System (PARS), the OneCode ACS records will contain the reason for nondelivery (nixie reason).

Q: What are the implications of using an ancillary service endorsement while participating in OneCode ACS?

During the version transition period, either no text endorsement or the use of a new generic endorsement (to be announced) is recommended to avoid the possibility of generation of hard copy address corrections.

For instance, if the endorsement "Address Service Requested" is printed on the mail, and there is no text ACS participant ID/keyline, the mail will forward, a hardcopy 3547 will be produced, and when the labeled mail processes through the automated equipment to its new destination, a OneCode ACS record may be produced.

Q: Exactly when will OneCode ACS be available?

A: Version 1 is available for First-Class automation letters beginning September 1, 2006. Other mail shapes, classes, and endorsements will become available in Version 2 as they are developed.

Q: When can I apply for OneCode ACS?

A: You can begin the application process today by completing PS Form 3273 and PS Form 1357-W.

Q: Does the use of OneCode ACS allow me to meet Move Update requirements?

A: Yes, just as Traditional ACS does.

Q: What is the transition period between Versions 1 and 2 of OneCode ACS?

A: Version 1, with limited features, is available September 1, 2006. Version 2 begins deployment in late 2006, with full deployment expected late in 2007. During Version 2 deployment, OneCode ACS mail processed through PARS will produce Version 2 ACS records.

Q: What are the differences between Version 1 and Version 2 of OneCode ACS, and how do they differ from Traditional ACS?

A: Version 1 of OneCode ACS is a passive process that takes place *after* mail has been through the redirection process. As the mail passes through automation to its next destination, mailpiece data is collected for those participating pieces identified by the 4-State Customer Barcode and sent to the NCSC. NCSC creates the ACS record and distributes it

to the participating mailers. Version 1 COA ACS records will not contain the name, but will contain the old and new addresses, along with the complete original barcode data. Version 1 Nixie ACS records will also contain the original barcode data, but will not contain the specific Deliverability Code. It will contain only the Q, indicating the mail piece was returned to sender. (These nixie records will only be available to mailers using "Address Service Requested – Option 2".) Under either ASR Option 1 or 2, returned mailpieces that have been processed through a forwarding unit will be labeled with either the new address or reason for nondelivery, just as they are today for this endorsement.

Version 2 is an active process where the forwarding unit reads and acts upon the barcode data itself, similar to Traditional ACS. Since the action is taken within the forwarding process *prior* to labeling, the COA name and the Deliverability Code are both available to be part of the ACS record. The main difference between OneCode ACS and Traditional ACS are manual corrections. OneCode ACS will not provide manual corrections if the barcode is unreadable or does not contain the correct data elements. In that case, the mail piece will be treated as unendorsed and no correction will be provided.

Available Features	Traditional ACS	OneCode ACS Version 1	OneCode ACS Version 2
Mail Classes	All	First-Class Mail®	First-Class Mail ®, expansion planned
Ancillary Endorsements	Address Service Requested and Change Service Requested (Options 1, 2 for First-Class)	Address Service Requested, Options 1 and 2 (2 required for returned mail notice)	ASR, Options 1 & 2, expansion planned
Mail Shapes	All	Automation Letters	Automation Letters, expansion planned
ACS Record Elements	All	All except COA name & deliverability code, plus barcode data	All, plus barcode data
PS Form 3547 creation	If ACS record cannot be produced, return of mail or PS Form 3547 (depending on endorsement)	If barcode is incorrect or unreadable, no address correction is produced	If barcode is incorrect or unreadable, mail is treated as unendorsed, no correction produced